



February 6, 2006

TO: Legislative Finance Committee

FR: Jeff Jacobsen, Dean and Director

RE: Montana Agricultural Experiment Station Progress

The Montana Agricultural Experiment Station (MAES) conducts research and outreach programs addressing contemporary agricultural and natural resource issues. In partnership with the federal government, our programs address state, regional and national priorities which are further refined by stakeholders based upon our capacities and areas of competence. Stakeholders provide guidance through local and state advisory committees and direct contact through associations.

How well are you meeting each of the published goals and objectives?

MAES utilizes the base funding provided by the State of Montana and the federal partner to compete for programmatic funding in support of our research and outreach mission. With over 100+ research projects, only several programs are highlighted: 1) molecular analyses on particular cells involved in immune response are being identified to enable vaccine development for livestock/wildlife (e.g. brucellosis, BSE, scours), 2) crop and animal products as renewable resources which decrease our dependency on external energy sources (e.g. biodiesel, lubricants, oilseeds), 3) evaluating pesticide harmonization issues with Canada (e.g. international trade), 4) implementation of animal and premise ID practices (e.g. traceability and animal health), 5) traditional breeding of barley and wheat, 6) developing organic cropping systems and new crops (e.g. value-added products), 7) in-depth monitoring of birds as carriers of West Nile Virus, and 8) integrated weed management practices in cropland and non-crop areas.

What are you measuring to determine accomplishments? Peer review of publications, sponsored program growth, acceptance of new ag and natural resource management practices, advisory group input, program and PI recognition.

Have you suffered any setbacks or encountered any particular challenges?

With facilities statewide, the rapidly escalating costs of any activity associated with energy, lack of competitiveness with local salaries, costs of facilities O&M and MSU direct charges consume financial and time resources which diminish our research and outreach capacity.

How can the legislature assist you? MAES does not benefit from the 6 mil levy, tuition or surcharge on items as the MUS does. The process to calculate our PLA in many budget categories, and MSU direct charges are in progress. In addition, allocation of one-time monies to MAES projects on the LRBP and for equipment would be very valuable and greatly enhance our competitiveness and capacities.

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Checkoff List for LFC Goals and Objectives Request

For each FTE update requested of the agencies, please use the checkoff below to identify any issues with the submission. If warranted, please elaborate.

Agency and Program – Montana Agricultural Experiment Station
(affiliated with MSU-Bozeman)

Information Provided

Agency indicated no specific goals and objectives existed. Yes___No_X__.

Response addressed all goals and objectives. Yes ___ No_X__.

This is a very complex agency with over 100 research projects and eight research facility locations. The response did not specify specific goals and objectives at each of the unique research locations. This may be helpful to a comprehensive understanding to this agency.

There are other issues with the response. Yes___ No_X__.

Response Indicates Issues

Did the response indicate that the agency was encountering issues of any kind in regard to meeting its goals and objectives? **Yes, the response indicates funding concerns in the face of increasing costs for utilities, salaries, and operations costs.**

Agency is not meeting one or more goals/objectives. Yes___ No_X__.

What are the major issues causing the lack of success in meeting the goals/objectives?
Not applicable.

Response shows major issues that may surface and/or have to be addressed through budget/legislative action. Yes___ No_X__.

Response raises concerns with cost increases and growing funding needs, but it does not indicate that these concerns are mission critical and require anything more than the typical biennial budget review and consideration.

Agency indicated they need legislative assistance. Yes___ No_X__.

The response identifies issues not related to the specific update requested Yes___ No_X__.

Other. Yes___ No_X__.

Future Action

Committee should continue to monitor. Yes___ No_X__. If yes:
Why and how often?

Another committee with interest should be notified. Yes___ No_X__. If yes, which committee?